



LeaderCorps Link



Illinois LeaderCorps is a Member-organized Council that connects AmeriCorps programs and acts as a liaison between Members and the Serve Illinois Commission.

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Save the Date! Upcoming Events

April 25-27:
Global Youth Service Day

May 11-18:
National AmeriCorps Week

In this Issue

Site Spotlight:
Aunt Martha's AmeriCorps

LeaderCorps Faces:
Meet Winnie Liu

Committee Updates
National Days of Service

Site Spotlight: Aunt Martha's AmeriCorps



By Jennifer Jones

Teen REACH is a program in the Chicago area, in affiliation with Aunt Martha's AmeriCorps. Founded in 1998, Teen REACH provides mentoring and tutoring services to young students. Currently, there are two Teen REACH sites in Chicago Heights: Forest Trail Junior High School and General George Patton Elementary School. Each site has 22 student participants in the program and three AmeriCorps members who implement the program. AmeriCorps members provide positive after-school activities as alternatives to destructive "street" behavior. The goal of the program is to preventatively combat teen pregnancy, drug use, and gang affiliation by affording each student with academic, life, and recreational skills.

Research has shown that young people participating in a program such as Teen REACH display higher abilities in problem-solving, possess more positive self-concepts, and have stronger connections to peers and adults in their communities.

Forest Trail Junior High School and General George Patton Elementary School's Teen REACH Programs' latest community undertaking was in honor of MLK Day. The sites collected non-perishable food goods during the month of January for the Park Forest and Riverdale food pantries. The community project was a success for the program and the communities.

Teen REACH is a proven success story that will continue to be an effective influence at Forest Trail Junior High School, General George Patton Elementary School, as well as the greater Chicago area.

-ABOUT US-

Mission

The mission of LeaderCorps is to connect AmeriCorps programs in Illinois through state, national and global days of service and promote continued AmeriCorps alumni involvement.

Vision

The vision of LeaderCorps is to foster effective cross-program communication and collaboration among AmeriCorps programs in Illinois.

LeaderCorps Faces: Winnie Liu Asian Human Services



By Abbey Jennings

Leader Corps member Winnie Liu was born in Ping Tung, Taiwan and lived there until she was eight years old. Her family then moved to Auckland, New Zealand. When Winnie turned fifteen, her family again relocated to Los Angeles, California. Winnie's high school years were spent at Phillips Academy, a boarding school in Andover, Massachusetts.

Upon graduating from high school, Winnie attended Wellesley College. She obtained her Bachelors of Arts (B.A.) in Psychology. Prior to starting AmeriCorps, Winnie was a lifeguard at a resort on Guam for a few months. She had the opportunity to travel in Asia and visited various cities in India and China. Winnie speaks Mandarin fluently.

Winnie feels that her volunteer experiences have always been very rewarding. As a recent college graduate, she felt inclined to use the knowledge she acquired in school by giving something back to the community. She was interested in serving at Asian Human Services in Chicago because she wanted to work with immigrants in a health-related field.

In the Community Health division of AHS, Winnie assists the staff with various health promotion and prevention projects. She is responsible for the creation and distribution of the Community Health monthly newsletters. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform and update the AHS community, including clients and partnering organizations, about important health information, services, and events. Winnie also organizes and coordinates Community Care monthly workshops by recruiting speakers on various health topics and participants from within and outside of the agency clientele. Lastly, she works closely with African immigrant populations in HIV/AIDS prevention through workshops, outreach, and needs assessment.

In Winnie's spare time she enjoys baking, playing the video game Rock Band, biking five miles to work, and board games. She is interested in healthcare policies and issues of gender and socio-economic disparities. Winnie aspires to work in the field of medicine or in public health, specifically health policy, after her AmeriCorps experience is finished.

LeaderCorps Committee Updates

Alumni Committee

The LeaderCorps Alumni Committee is creating an online survey to collect contact information for all AmeriCorps Alums in Illinois, in an effort to establish Alumni Chapters throughout the state. The committee is utilizing online social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace to connect Alumni in Illinois. In addition, this committee is promoting and encouraging all AmeriCorps members and Alums to register on the Alumni website, www.americorpsalums.org.

National AmeriCorps Week Committee

The National AmeriCorps Week Committee is also going digital, establishing a MySpace profile to provide updates on the various events that will take place during National AmeriCorps Week, May 11th- 18th. The site will also include a www.firstgiving.com link that will allow users to donate money toward statewide efforts to decrease hunger and homelessness in Illinois.

Marketing/Outreach Committee

Communication is the primary focus for the LeaderCorps Marketing and Outreach Committee. Marketing and Outreach is responsible for the creation, publication, and distribution of the LeaderCorps Link. Marketing and Outreach looks to expand into the virtual realm in the coming months.

If you have any suggestions about what you would like to see in upcoming issues of the LeaderCorps Link, contact AmeriCorps Project YES! member **Esther Lindstrom** at elindstrom@nush.org

National Days of Service



Well into the program year, Illinois LeaderCorps turns its attention to National AmeriCorps Week. LeaderCorps, in conjunction with AmeriCorps programs and other partners throughout Illinois, is planning a statewide food and clothing drive for National AmeriCorps Week, May 11-18, 2008.

This year's theme, "Linking Lives in the Land of Lincoln," showcases AmeriCorps programs providing services that impact not only our individual communities, but the state of Illinois as a whole. More than twenty programs will come together to collaborate with community partners throughout the week, implementing regional food and clothing drives. National AmeriCorps Week will culminate with regional service events and community gatherings. Currently, Illinois AmeriCorps programs are preparing for the week's events through fundraising and publicity-building efforts. Illinois LeaderCorps aims to unite various AmeriCorps programs with each other, while also involving AmeriCorps Alumni and community members. We hope to raise awareness about the presence and impact of AmeriCorps in Illinois communities by uniting in a week of service.

Global Youth Service Day Projects **April 25-27, 2008**

Recycle, Reuse, and Reduce
Uptown: *Asian Human Services*

4th Annual Community Garden Renewal
Humboldt Park: *AmeriCorps Project YES!*

Global Youth Service and STARFYZYG
Hyde Park: *City Year*

Food and Clothing for the Homeless
North Lawndale: *PCC AmeriCorps*

2nd Annual Global Youth Service Carnival
Riverdale, IL: *Aunt Martha's AmeriCorps*

**Global Youth Service Day-Springfield
Terrace**
Springfield, IL: *ACE Program*

Family Challenge Weekend
Rock Falls, IL: *ABC AmeriCorps*

Youth Service America
www.ysa.org

For more information about
National Days of Service,
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